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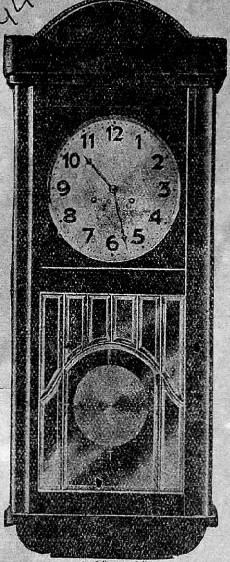

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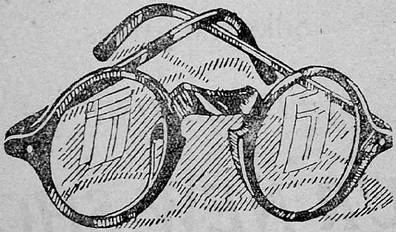

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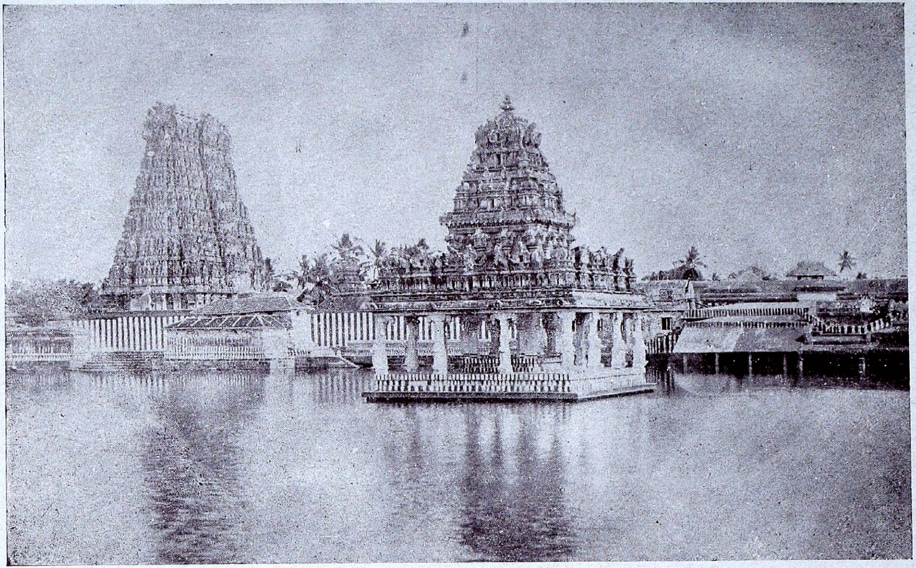

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Gifts of the East

(Diary Leaves)

By NICHOLAS ROERICH

THERE is before us an ancient Mongol coin. On it are reproduced the sun, the moon and the seven stars of the Great Bear or the Seven Elders. This is a broad dream of the heavens. A dream of miracles and wonders of the Great Blue Sky of Chingiz-Khan.

Verily a broad concept.

Is it not striking that the Mongols bathed their horses in the Adriatic? The Mongols were in Paris, Lyons and Valencia. The Mongols supplied helmets to the army of Philip the Beautiful. Alancon comes from the Alans. The Alans are esteemed in the Mongolian camps.

All this is boundless, as is also the whole advance of the East to the West, under the sign of Crusades and following the trails of great travellers. The West often forgets how many heritages of the East it has accepted during many ages in the time of Marco Polo, Plano Karpini, Rubruquvist, Lonjumo, d'Anselico and other daring spirits.

"The Mongol invasions have left such a hatred behind them that their artistic elements are always neglected. It is forgotten that the mysterious cradle of Asia has produced these quaint people and has enwrapped them in the gorgeous veils of China, Tibet and Hindustan. Russia has not only suffered from the Tartar swords, but has also heard through their jingling the wondertales known to the clever Greeks and the intelligent Arabians who wandered along the Great Road from the Normans to the East.

The Mongol manuscripts and the annals of the foreign envoys of these days tell us of an unaccountable mixture of cruelty and refinement with the great nomads. The best artists and masters were to be found at the headquarters of the Tartar Khans."

Thus I emphasized in my lecture "Joy of Art."

In 1202 the Italian Leonardo da Pisa writes the mathematical treatise "Liber abacci" already with Arabic figures. He also uses for the first time the Arabic cipher—zero, voidness—vacuum. Arabic figures!—But the Arabs themselves in full justice call them Indian figures. Often we come across the Indian cradle. The gifts of the East are unlimited. And even now the khozars, this old tribe, lives in Afganistan.

Algebra, alidad, zenith, nadir, azimuth and finally Aldebaran, Algol, Altair—they all come from the Arabs, from the East.

From the same source there come many conceptions in medicine and the natural science. Alcohol, alembic, alkal, amalgam and many many others—are from the East. In Spain we see an Arabian university at Kordova and the same in the South of Italy at Salerno. The physician of the Sultan of Egypt cures Louis IX. The words sirop, julep, elixir, camphor and many others were already recorded in the medicine of the East.

Even in agriculture the East gave useful advices to the West. Mais is from Asia, the sugar cane, rice, indigo, shaffran, tea and a whole series of fruit trees and vegetables have their home in the East. Many pilgrims carried in their travelling bags various seeds and saturated with them their home country. The apricot was called the pear of Damask. The eschalot is from Askalon. Artichokes, spinach, estragon—are all from the Arabs. The wines of Cyprus, Ghaza, Askalon, theraisins of Greece and Palestine are all the gifts of the East. Arabian horses, karabahs, karashars, donkeys, mules and finally the hunting geopards, so beautifully depicted on the canvasses of Gozzolo—all this is from the vastnesses of Asia. It is stated that even the windmills are from Asia.

The industry of the East has since long tempted Europe—the sugar of Antiochia and Tripoli, the cotton from Beyreuth, Aleppo, Akra, the silk from Tyre, Tortosa, Tiveriada, he muslin cloth from Mossul, muar, taft and shoffon from the Arabs, the carpets from Iran, the Eastern compositions of colour, leather from Kordova, the celebrated Spanish-Mauritian fayences.

In the terminology of seafaring—bussol, admiral, arsenal, musson, feluka, corvet, shalanda, tartana—all from the East.

On the battle fields the Eastern armies were mighty enemies. More than once the West during encounters with the East, learned new military strategies, discipline, watchfulness and alertness. Powerful orders of knights were inaugurated after coming in contact with the East. Western warriors imitated from the East excellent armours. Swords of Damask up to now have the reputation of highest quality. Torches, small shields, came from the East. Saracinian (armour) bakhteretz the Eastern helmets misurka and a quantity of manifold armour and

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saddlery has its origin in the East. Let us not forget that the word "ulan" which is applied in many armies is a purely Mongolian word. In the Russian, Polish and Lithuanian vocabulary there are many Mongolian and other Eastern words, which have become deeply enrooted: essual, (an officer's rank) kuyack, (a helmet); meren (a horse), tamga (a seal); yam (a postal station); yarlyck (a label); yar (a steep river bank), karaul (a watchman); dokha (a furcoat); chumbur (bridle), argamack (a steed) and many other similar widely applied words.

In the East the crusaders, in order to be distinguished during battle, began to depict on their shields the first symbolic signs which remained afterwards as coats of arms. Many heraldic animals have their origin in the East: the unicorn, elephant, lion, griffon, dragon. On our shield the stars are Eastern. The very colouring of the shield, even in terminology, reminds Iran and other countries of the East.

Innumerable scents, perfumes, pomades and all sorts of cosmetics came from the East. Many terms in the household and of furniture came from the same source—divan, baldachin, alcove, sunduck, caraffe, jar—all are from there, as also the name of many precious stones. Even the word "galeta" reminds us of Galata.

Often the Eastern nations were pictured by prejudiced chroniclers as intolerant, cruel, even treacherous and immoral. Yet at the same time we have irrefutable historical data about their tolerance, humaneness, honour and charity. We admire the valour and daring of Chingiz Khan and of many warriors of the East. The Saracinians were called by some historians ignorant barbarians, yet at the same time in their universities and from their cultures in science, in art, one could see how they excelled the conceited Westerners of those days. Contact with Eastern nations was one of the main impulses of the middle ages. It called forth in several domains of life a kind of awakening. This was a precursor of renaissance.

In the book "Duke of Mongolia" there are narrated many testimonies about Mongolia:

The first impressions of a foreigner crossing Mongolia will be unfavourable as regards the military strength of this country, but in reality the military force of Mongolia is not so small, as a casual observer may think. Every Mongol is an excellent rider and marksman. The whole population loves hunting as a sport. The Mongols shoot from their saddle, and from childhood are accustomed to archery and lassoing from gallopping horses.

The bow and arrow, even quite recently, were the main weapons of the Mongols. Archery competitions are up to now the main enterainment during the Annual Festival...A sure eye and a steady hand are required to mark the target, when turning back from a horse at full

gallop. In this way the Mongols also have become masters of the rifle, with which they acquaint themselves with surprising ease. Almost no shot in a battle misses its aim.

The Mongols love their country more than many other people. They have many advantages in the defence of their country. They quickly judge distances, are used to the air of the heights; they are clever in manoeuvring across their hilly country.

The Mongols can endure great hardships without food and water and can stand the terrific local hurricanes. Besides an active resistance the Mongols have also great petrence and persistence. The Mongol population living in yurtas can leave their whole settlement overnight. The cattle will be driven away, the well will be destroyed, and the intruder will find himself in an empty desert without food and water, left to the mercy of the rough nature.

The Mongols can stand a great deal and the heroic deeds described in annals since the time of Chingiz Khan are not fairy tales.

The same may be stated of many peoples in the East. And the West in the past has acquired many gifts from the East. Religion, philosophy and many other most precious treasures of spirit and culture in full justice should be ascribed to the East, to Asia. Why this is so is not for us to judge. The historian can but base himself on reality. And no one can diminish the great value of the gifts of the East.

I was glad to receive the book of Dr. Hara Davan about Chingiz Khan. The author belongs to the East and therefore his enlightened judgement is the more convincing. He knows of what he speaks. He understands the deep culture at the foundation of many great movements, which may be incomprehensible to outsiders. Also the recently deceased Vadimirtzeff correctly evaluated the treasures of Asia.

Gratitude is the quality of Arhats. Following with great ordainment let us be grateful for all great gifts, in all their multifacetness and significance.

Let us remember all the great gifts of India. Let us remember how unexpectedly was often expressed appreciation there, where in mediaval distances one might have expected insufficient knowledge. Dante in his "Paradise" inspiringly mentions the Orient, the Ganges and the blessed One!

Developments in the Art of War*

Ry T. K. VENKATARAMAN, M. A., L. T.

COMBAT has been styled by some writers as one of the age-long instincts of humanity. But, if it is true, it does not justify war. We can as well justify robbery in the name of the "predatory instinct" of humanity, or murder in the name of the impulse of sadism. Just as the evolution of the reign of law has subordinated anti-social instincts of men within a given country, we may well hope, the evolution of the reign of law in the international sphere may lead to the same tendency in the relations of humanity in world-politics. Till that happy consumation is reached it is unfortunately a duty to take up arms to repel the unjustified onslaughts of aggressors like the totalitarian powers who are guided by only one law—the law of the jungle.

In the primitive ages, when man scarcely emerged from barbarism, he must have relied on the natural weapons of his fisticuffs, supplemented often by nails and teeth. But even by the stone age, man had learnt to wield an axe, though the axe-head was a flint ground to a fine edge, and to use a bow with flint heads for arrows.

The discovery of metals was a very important step. We now have the evolution of weapons which could be used for tackling wild beasts, and also for fighting fellowman. In the Chalcolithic culture of the Indus Valley, we find the use of spears, besides the old bow and arrow. But the people do not seem to be warlike, resembling in this the people of another equally well-developed culture — Cretans. When we come to Egypt, we notice that the early Egyptians mainly relied on infantry, armed with large shields, battle-axes and spears. The Hyskor kings who invaded Egypt brought with them a new formidable contrivance — chariots drawn by horses. By the time of Rameses II, the Egptians had become accustomed to this and used it in their wars. A remarkable bas-relief at Lagash showing one of the Sumerian priest-kings leading his army to battle about 3000 B. C. shows a force of infantry carrying battle-axes and protecting their whole body by huge shields. They use also long pikes. But the most warlike of these ancient peoples were the Assyrians. Their foot-soldiers were armed with highly effective iron spears. Besides, they had a force of charioteers, each chariot accommodating, besides the driver, a bowman. There was also a cavalry force of archers. They were familiar with the battering ram mounted on wheels and used it to cause breeches in the walls of a besieged city. The Persians of the days of Cyrus specialised

* Being an Extension Lecture delivered in the Madras University on March, 22.

in skilful archery and shattered their enemies by pouring on them a rain of arrows.

In our country, remarkable progress had been made since the time of the Rigveda in the evolution of warfare. The Mahabharata, in the Shanti Parva, gives details of how to conduct military operations and shows a marvellous acquaintance with diverse kinds of weapons and the knowledge of using these according to the nature of the terrain. Mauryan imperialism relied on a powerful standing army, organised on the traditional four-fold classification, cavalry, infantry, elephantry and chariots. The infantry numbered nearly 600,000 men. According to the Artashastra, the army was organised in squads of 10 men, companies consisting of 100 men and battalians which normally consisted of 1000 men. The commissariat was carefully supervised and an efficient ambulance service including doctors and nurses followed the army in times of war. Rules of warfare found in the literary works indicate high advance in the knowledge of troop formations ("Vyuhas") and military tactics. Sound canons, based on humanity, forbade molestation of non-combatants, women and children, suppliants and the standing crops. Use of treachery and deceit in the conduct of a war was strongly condemned.

Turning to Europe, Greece illustrates for us the development of a real science of war in that continent. By the sixth century B. C., the old Homeric combats between single champions had disappeared, and Sparta had evolved the phalanx--a well organised formation of the foot-soldiers (hoplites) trained specialy for fighting and armed with long lances. Athens developed a powerful navy, though in these days, naval warfare was rudimentary and mainly consisted of ramming the war galleys of the opponent and disabling them. Dionysius I of Syracuse proved himself a past master in combining and co-ordinating cavalry and infantry and also naval force and he invented the catapult which enabled the easy capture of fortresses. The Macedonian kings, Philip and Alexander the Great, further developed these ideas. Hitherto, most of the fighting in Greece was done by hoplites. Philip gave an important place to the cavalry which worked in close co-operation with the infantry. The cavalry would operate on each wing, and the phalanx in the centre, and the whole organised force formed a terrible machine which destroyed all resistance.

The Roman legion consisted of heavily-armed foot soldiers divided into companies in such a way that the ability to manouvre in mass formation was combined with the ability to fight in small groups. Each legion had attached to it a force of cavalry. Unlike the Greek hoplite who relied on the spear, the Roman centurion fought chiefly with short swords. The highest development of the Roman army was under Julius Caesar, the most brilliant military genius produced by Rome. His swift movements and surprise tactics paralysed

the resistance of his enemies. The battle of Pharsalus in which he defeated Pompey is illustrative. Pompey had placed his cavalry in the left wing with the idea of breaking Caesar's right wing with it and, passing rounding it, taking Caesar's army in the rear. Caesar with his uncanny judgment saw through this plan and shifted his best cohorts to the right without the enemy's knowledge. According to a pre-arranged plan, Caesar's cavalry made a feint retreat, and Pompey's cavalry followed in persuit, unsuspecting. Then Caesar's cohorts attacked them from behind, while his cavalry charged them in front. Thus, Pompey's cavalry was cut to pieces. Then, Caesar's cavalry swifty swept round to the undefended left of the enemy and attacked it from the rear, while his other forces attacked it in front. Pompey's fate was decided.

When we come to the Middle Ages in Europe, new circumstances lead to new developments. Attacks of fierce barbarian marauders and the decay of organised governmental authority after the death of Charlemagne led to universal violence and disorder. Defence became increasingly a matter of local concern, and thus arose the strongly fortified castle—often perched on a rock and defended by moats, strong ramparts and high towers. This formed the best defence against attacks. To reduce the castle, long sieges were needed, though the besiegers used battering rams and catapults. Assault was no easy matter even after forcing the walls, for the besieged could pour on the assault party boiling liquids or subject them to a concentrated flood of arrows from all the towers. To repel the plundering invaders, there arose the feudal cavalry—consisting of knights clad in armour and helmet, and armed with spear and sword. The shield which protected the knight reached often as high as his shoulder. In warfare there was no idea of tactics except the shock of the cavalry charge. By the later middle ages it was being discovered that a well-disciplined infantry could resist the attack of the feudal cavalry. This lesson, learnt by the English in their wars with Scotland, was applied by them in the Hundred Years' War against France. The French tried to provide a remedy against the deadly hail of arrows from the foot-soldiers by substituting plate for chain armour. But this, by increasing the weight of the armour, destroyed the mobility of the feudal force. The last nail in the coffin of the Feudal army was the use of gun powder. Gun powder, which was first used by the Chinese and the Arabs, became familiar in Europe in the thirteenth century, though it came into greater use in war only by the fifteenth century. The gun destroyed the protection given by the armour, while the cannon spelled the doom of the castle. The siege of Constantinople in 1453 when the Turks captured it was marked by the use of old and new weapons—bows, lances, catapult, gun powder and cannon.

The early gun was like a small cannon fired by the hand. By the beginning of the sixteenth century, we have the arquebus or the

Matchlock which avoided the necessity of firing by the hand though still a match was needed. Often moisture spoiled the gun powder and the match. So, till the seventeenth century when a more improved gun came into use, the bow was used along with the gun. In the seventeenth century was invented the bayonet and the use of cartridges. Hand grenades came into use; and hence the term " Grenadiers ."

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries warfare was quite unlike the modern wars. The number of armies was often very small, and each army sought out the other to defeat it. Gustavus Adolphus, who introduced novel tactics in the Thirty Years' War, used a moblile infantry armed with a light musket, and subjected his men to thorough drill. He was also the first general to give his men a distinctive uniform.

With the Duke of Marlborough, we come to another landmark. Before his time, warfare consisted mainly of sieges of towns and ravaging of territory. Marlborough, a master of war, believed in rapid movements with the object of surprising the enemy and forcing him to fight pitched battles, and always took the initiative. Another great master of rapid movements was Frederick the Great of Prussia, who followed a manouvre called the "Diagonal March" which took the enemy unawares and made him collapse before this unsuspected attack.

But the greatest master of military strategy in the eighteenth century was Napoleon Bonaparte. He inherited and developed devices adopted by the great French generals before his time, and understood fully the value of time in action and the importance of 'surprise tactics'. He used cavalry mainly for reconnaissance, and relied principally on his artillery which he used with devastating effect on the enemy. His method of requisitioning the countryside of the occupied areas for supplies avoided cumbering the army with things which would delay his lightning movements. His supremacy in land warfare was unquestioned till the Peninsular War which gave Wellesley (later the Duke of Wellington) his opportunity. A man of sound judgment, though not a magnetic personality like Napoleon, Wellington made his plans after great calculation.

We must note here that the eighteenth century wars were fought mainly between armies formed in lines who reserved their fire till they made their final charge on the enemy. While Britain continued this "Line" formation, after the French Revolution, the French army had been massed into compact columns. Because of Napoleon's success, other European states imitated this "column" formation. Wellington proved in the Peninsular War the superiority of the British "line" formation. Meanwhile, the war had conclusively proved that, in the circumstances which existed then, an island like England, which relied for her main defence on a powerful navy, could safely defy an aggressor whose strength was mainly military.

Like Louis XIV before him, Napoleon failed against England. England was fortunate in producing the great genius, Nelson. By rapid movements, he dislocated enemy plans. As Dr. Holland Rose points out, Napoleon never completely understood the science of sea-warfare and ordered the movements of his fleets as if they were armies.

But one great contribution the French Revolution had made to military history. The army produced by the Revolution was a citizen army, quite unlike the mercenary armies of the other powers of the day, and imbued with national patriotism. Officers in it were chosen on grounds of ability; and not because of their birth. Conscription was foreshadowed in the "Levee en masse" in which all citizens of military age were called upon for service.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, conditions begin to change. The Crimean War was the last war fought in Napoleonic methods. No advantage was taken of the resources of modern science. Sanitation in camp and the health of the army were not adequately safeguarded.

We see a change after the middle of the century. Prussia had built up a powerful army based on universal conscription. Moltke armed the soldiers with a new type of breech-loading rifle which could fire far more rapidly than the old type. The short, sharp war with Austria proved the efficiency of this new army. Incidentally the Austro—Prussian war was the first war in which we find modern methods like the use of railways and telegraph. The succeeding Franco-German War, a triumph of German strategy, proved that a modern war is one of brains and organisation, and not a simple struggle in muscular power.

German example found imitators everywhere. By the beginning of the twentieth century, armies based on conscription and navies equipped on new lines increased at prodigious speed. Militarism developed huge armament industries in all countries. New explosives of more terrible power than gun powder were discovered. We have bigger and bigger guns produced. The machine gun and barbed wire entanglements developed as efficient methods of defence. In the sea, armoured steel battle ships became the rule. In 1906, the British launched the Dreadnought—a large warship operated by turbine engines and fitted with huge guns. Other nations followed suit. Submarines were first launched by the French, though they were seriously adopted for use only by Germany later. Count Zeppelin invented in 1900 airships capable of long voyages, and soon followed aeroplanes of different kinds.

The stage is now set for the Great War of 1914—18. The war saw revolutionary changes. The old distinction between combatants and non-combatants rapidly disappeared because the whole productive energy of the nation was directed for war purposes. It was revealed

that success in war depends on the efficiency in industrial utilisation and economic strength and hence conscription of all men and women for production connected with the war. There was no battle in the old sense, for the armies were millions of men engaged throughout the Fronts, continuous fighting going on day and night throughout the area. The soldiers dug themselves into elaborately fortified trenches which kept the enemy at bay. New weapons of war, far beyond anything that Napoleon could conceive of, developed. The Germans perfected huge size howitzers, and, in 1918, were able to shell Paris from a distance of 70 miles. Napoleon's cannon had only a range of 600 yards. Giant shells, some loaded with deadly gases of different kinds, killed and injured myriads. Poison gas, it may be noted, was first used by the Germans, though it was soon countered by the evolution of the gas mask. New engines were invented for the discharge of shells. The motor cars helped to move troops rapidly and to secure them supplies. This established the superiority of mechanised troops, and thus revolutionised all military theories. The British invented the Tank—huge armoured cars whose sides could not be penetrated by ordinary shells and which could surmount all obstacles in the countryside. In naval war, the Germans principally relied on submarines to destroy enemy merchant ships, and scattering mines also for the same purpose. The allies answered the submarine peril by introducing the convoy system in which fleets of merchant ships were protected by destroyers armed with new devices for destroying submarines.

Mines were countered by Mine sweepers—gun boats with apparatus designed to gather up mines and put them out of action. Air warfare developed, though not on the scale seen in the present war. Aeroplanes were useful mainly for reconnaisance. But, it was a fatal discovery even now that they could be equipped for fighting. The use of propaganda and diplomacy to win over neutral States is well developed.

The Napoleonic strategy that the army must always cultivate the offensive was discredited by the appalling failures of the German offensives, and thus arose the doctrine that Defence is always superior.

The present war is, on one side, a further development of these tendencies, while, on the other side, it showed new possibilities which proved that some old preconceived views were wrong. Thus the war became Totalitarian, harnessing the full energy, resources and man power of the combatant States. Use of shells had assumed terrible proportions, and long range guns on the channel coasts in England and France shell at each other. Tanks have been speeded up and made more and more mobile, while tank traps and anti-tank shells have developed as defence against these moving monsters. The submarine peril is countered to some extent by attacks from aeroplanes which could see

them under the sea, and they could be located by the Aodic method—a special apparatus to detect them by sound. One development in mining is the magnetic mine which, acting on the iron in the ships blows them up, though this danger is, to a certain extent, overcome by using anti-magnetic cables. Mine sweepers also use the Paravane—an apparatus hung on long wires and used to detonate mines harmlessly. The most amazing development of this war is the use of airships in action. Fighter aeroplanes with guns are illustrated by the British Spitfires and Hurricanes. The Bomber type is used for deadly raids on enemy territory and could pour from the skies high explosive bombs which could destroy even concrete and steel structures, or incendiary bombs which would start huge fires, or bombs filled with dangerous gases. To counter this danger has arisen the special technique of the A. R. P., involving black-outs, evacuation, fire-fighting equipment, ambulance and salvage machinery, and construction of bomb-proof shelters. To defend against air attacks there have been erected baloon-barrages which prevent dive-bombing. Airships flying high could be tackled by anti-aircraft gun, or fighter planes. Aeroplanes have been used also to carry troops, to fire torpedos from the air, and to scatter mines or to drop troops in enemy territory in parachutes. Though an island power like Britain no longer commands, because of this, the absolute security she had before, it is still unproved that command of the ocean no longer means security. The war has so far proved that the battleship has found new defences against air attack and still rules the sea. Fierce air attacks have not got for Hitler the mastery of Britain.

Germany's success in the continent in this war disproved the theory that defence was superior to offence. Germany developed the special technique of the Blitzkreig—breaking into a country before it could mobilize its defences, and advancing without giving the defence time to rally and solidify. The advance is made rapidly by the mechanised units supported by bombing aeroplanes which disorganise all resistance. The British successfully imitated the "Blitzkreig" tactics against the Italians in Libya. French warfare has become unimportant and the use of motorised troops and these new tactics seem to be a return to the "shock tactics" of the cavalry warfare of Napoleonic days. Along with this, the Nazis have also exploited the weak elements within a country by developing "fifth column activities" designed to paralyse rasistance and breed internal troubles in the country, and sometimes, by sabotage of electric power stations, water supply, drainage etc., cause difficult situations inside the country.

The use of propaganda is now vastly developed owing to the development of Broadcasting which has given opportunities of influencing the neutrals through the Radio, and the showing in neutral

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countries of films purposely prepared to advertise the strength and victories of a particular power. The Nazis have also followed a policy, of intimidation—the so-called war of nerves—designed to influence small neutrals. It is clear that, in a gigantic war between big States, neutrality has become a very difficult position and the old world ideas of International Law have ceased to have any meaning.

This survey has shown that the development of the machinery of war has now assumed perilous proportions. The harnessing of the vast resources of science for the purpose of destruction must mean the ultimate extinction of the human species if the danger is not realised and attempts made not only to banish "war as an instrument of National policy" but to provide a world machinery which would keep unscrupulous international law breakers in their places and secure for humanity the precious blessings of ordered security and peace for all ages.

A Forgotten Indo-Anglian Poet:

Nagesh Wishwanath Pai.

By K. R. SRINIVASA IYENGAR, M. A., D. Litt.

IN any study of the contributions made by Indians to English Literature a place must be found for Nagesh Wishwanath Pai. It is a matter for regret that while early Indo-Anglians like Toru Dutt, Manmohan Ghose and Michael Madhusudhan are generally well known, there are very few indeed who have even heard of Mr. Pai. The present writer knows next to nothing about Mr. Pai's life. These facts, however, may be given: Nagesh Wishwanath Pai was born about the year 1860; he graduated from the St. Xavier's College, Bombay, in 1881, and took his LL. B. one or two years later. He then practised first as a High Court Pleader in Bombay and later as Government Pleader in Sholapur. He published two books, *Stray Sketches from Chakmakpur* and *The Angel of Misfortune*, about the turn of the new century. He died about 1915.

Of his two publications, the first, *Stray Sketches from Chakmakpur*, was in prose. It belongs to a class of books—in which may be included Behramji Malabari's *Gujarat and the Gujaratis* and Mr. K. S. Venkataramani's *Paper Boats*—which aim at giving a first-hand and sympathetic interpretation of Indian life through the medium of the English language. Mr Pai's "Chakmakpur" is any town in India—Madras, or Belgaum, or Bombay, or what you please; it is, however, in a very special sense, the Bombay of forty years ago. Priests, reciters, street-sellers, and representatives of various trades and professions figure in the candid pages of the book; and each of them is life-like, interesting, and absolutely convincing. The average foreigner who attempts similar sketches sees Indians only from the outside, and his knowledge is therefore partial, at times even perverted. Mr. Pai, on the other hand, is rooted in the soil for all his sophisticated life in Bombay; he presents Indian life from the inside, having as it were seized his characters by inward vision; and hence his portraits are not merely vivid and arresting, they are also lit by a sympathy that endears them to our hearts. Moreover, the book is throughout written in a simple and homely style that seems singularly appropriate to Mr. Pai's themes.

His next work, *The Angel of Misfortune*, is a metrical romance in ten Books. It consists of over 5,000 lines in blank verse The Indo-Anglians have not given us many readable poems of similar scope. Derozio's *The Fakir of Jhungpeera* and Principal Seshadri's *Bilhana* come readily to one's mind: but Mr. Pai's poem is easily the best of

its class. The verse is flowing, the story is well-knit and is full of incidents that surprise and satisfy, the atmosphere is wholly Indian: and, above all, the book is redolent of Hindu culture. The poem deserves to be widely known in India and abroad.

Mr. Pai explains in his preface that the story of the poem is founded on two popular Indian legends; but, he adds, "after selecting from the materials available such as suited his purpose, the author has felt himself at liberty to draw on his own imagination for the rest." Be that as it may, *The Angel of Misfortune* is a coherent whole, and not a patched up affair. The story may be briefly summarized as follows:

King Vikrama, or Vikramaditya, of Avanti and Ujjain, has had to surrender his crown to the Angel of Misfortune; this latter may be no other than the Saturn that causes endless miseries to Nala. As he is resting under a banyan tree, leagues away from his domains, Vikrama sees a crouching tiger ready to spring upon two tired horses yoked to a chariot slaking their thirst in the nearby stream. Vikrama gives battle to the tiger and slays it. The master of the chariot is a rich jeweller by name Motichand. He profusely thanks Vikrama and takes him to Champa, an adjoining city. There Vikrama serves the rich Motichand as guard to his treasures. Meanwhile, Motichand is commissioned by a neighbouring king to make a necklace for his queen. When the costly necklace is ready, Motichand is overpersuaded by his handsome wife to allow her to wear it for a day. At the time of her bath, she leaves the necklace in the custody of Vikrama. Unfortunately for him, the Angel of Misfortune swoops down in the guise of a swan and, in spite of his shafts, carries the necklace away. Vikrama's story is not believed by Motichand and his wife; he is taken before Champa's king who orders Vikrama to be chained to the ground till he dies. It is decreed death to try to give food to Vikrama. An aged hermit, who had been previously nursed back to health by Vikrama, would fain give him succour; but Vikrama would not allow the hermit to put his own life in jeopardy. The hermit pleads with the king of Champa, but in vain; he therefore betakes himself to Avanti to beg King Vikrama (not knowing that Vikrama was really in Champa) to save the condemned man from the wrath of Champa's ruler.

Vikrama is at last overcome by fatigue and swoons. An old widow, disregarding the king's edict, sprinkles water on Vikrama's temples. He recovers, but the widow herself is arrested and taken before the king. Her disinterestedness and tender humanity move the king who gives her one thousand golden coins besides permitting her to tend Vikrama though still in chains, in her own hut. Vikrama soon regains his normal health and helps his benefactress by daily driving the ox round her oil mill. He is care-free, and he sings in joyful abandon. His music is overheard by chance by Champa's princess, Indira, who

calls him out. It is the day of Holi, Kamadeva's day. Whoever loved that loved not at first sight? Chained and in disgrace, Vikrama is still the purest of the pure, the bravest, the best in Indira's eyes. The Angel of Misfortune, the Swarthy Angel, tempts Vikrama yet once more—he could gain his heart's desire, fair Indira herself, if only he would break his promise to his whilom suppliants. Vikrama is Vikrama still; his resolves to die rather than dishonour his word abides. Even the Swarthy Angel is appeased at last. She would now repair her wrongs. She compels Champa's king to hold a durbar to which all are invited, among them Vikrama in chains. Publicly the Angel confesses her part in the theft of the necklace and returns it to Vikrama. Motichand and the king profusely apologise to Vikrama; his chains are removed; and he is a guest of the king's.

The aged and enraged hermit has in the meantime reached Avanti and brought with him a huge army to the environs of Champa. The Angel of Misfortune has surrendered Avanti's crown to the army leaders and asked them to seek their rightful king in Champa. Their emissary threatens to destroy Champa if its king fails to restore Vikrama to his army. Champa's king is intrigued by all this, and knows not what to say; but Vikrama now reveals himself, and all is well that ends well. He asks for Indira's hand. The last Book contains some delicate irony. Champa's king and his daughter are speaking at cross-purposes, he pleading for King Vikrama, she refusing him, loving in her heart only the ex-prisoner who had won her affections on Kamadeva's day. The misunderstandings are cleared, and she meets Avanti's king alone and, in reply to his fervent protestations of love,

> whilst her youthful heart
> Beats fast, in tremulous accents answers low
> And sweet, "My lord!—My gracious lord! I am thine."

And that is the end of the poem.

From the foregoing summary it will be readily seen that Mr. Pai's is an interesting and moving story. He is lucky in his hero, for the Hindu naturally responds to stories about Vikrama, the great king, the king of kings. His heroism, his capacity for suffering, his manly bearing, his humanity, these are subtly insinuated and woven into the texture of the poem. Rationalists may object to the introduction of the Swarthy Angel; but Mr. Pai himself calls his poem a "fairy tale" and anyhow the supernatural is not ruled out in romantic epics. The Angel is indeed integral to the scheme of the poem: he is pitted against King Vikrama; ruthless power is in conflict with uncomplaining virtue. It is the same old theme of Harischandra, of Nala, of Job, enacted once again. Towards his enemies—so to call the Angel, Motichand, Champa's king and others—Vikrama bears no malice; he is the true satyagrahi, hoping to convert the other party to his own point of view at long last. Vikrama, as portrayed by Mr. Pai, is a hero

cast in the mould of Rama himself. He gladly surrenders his crown to save his subjects from misery; he shows no eagerness to return to his kingdom, nor even to get his chains removed; it is only when duty calls him back that he accepts the sacred trust of kingship. These words of Mr. Masti Venkatesa Iyengar, though written in a different context, are pertinent to King Vikrama as well: "The heroic man does not become an exile from power to be free from responsibility. Whether on the throne or out of it, his burden is his own. No one else can carry it. On the throne he may have some comfort along with the toil of kingship; off the throne he is free of the comfort, not the toil.... It is the outlook that makes acceptance or renunciation great or small."

While, not inappropriately, Vikrama dominates the scene, the various other characters too are memorably drawn. Indira, the heroine, is an adorable creature. Mr. Pai's language takes wings as he describes the dawn of her sweet adolescence; he piles simile upon simile in the manner of the authentic heroic poets:

> And now the magic touch of youth has wrought
> A miracle of beauty in her form
> Making what was already lovely shine
> With added loveliness, each graceful curve
> And dimple look more 'witching than before,
> And what was soft seem softer, what was bright
> Grow brighter still. And as a tender bud
> Kissed by the sun's warm beams as it expands
> Unfolds its hidden wonders to the view;
> So, here, the ardent rays of youth's bright morn
> Disclose a hundred charms and graces all
> Unknown and unsuspected till they burst
> Upon the startled eye like poet's dream
> Or wondrous vision of the world to come.

Her loyalty to heart's promptings, her tender solicitude for Vikrama while yet in chains, her refusal to be overawed by the mere name of a 'king of kings', these are among the beautiful things in the book. And what can be more moving, more in accord with Hindu traditions, than this picture of Indira—

> All trembling like a startled fawn now stands
> The gentle princess, whilst the youthful king
> In burning accents speaks the boundless love
> That fills his generous heart. She modest bends
> Her lovely head to hide the tell-tale blush
> That might betray the love she would conceal.
> Nor does she boldly raise her lustrous eyes
> To Vikram's noble face, but shyly steals
> A side-long glance, and as it meets by chance
> His ardent gaze, her eye-lids softly droop
> In sweet confusion.

Similarly, the jeweller Motichand, his wife, the old widow, the hermit, the King of Champa, every one of them is convincingly drawn.

In no more than a dozen lines Mr. Pai invokes the wan figure of Motichand's aged mother, her eye for the surpassing beauty of the necklace, her motherly pride in her son's exquisite craftsmanship, her silent prayer for his sake. In like manner, Mr. Pai succeeds in portraying the physiognomy and behaviour of men in the mass whether in moments of jubilation, awe or frenzied alarms.

As a poet of Nature, too, Mr. Pai's achievements must commend themselves to the Indian reader. His birds and beasts, his flowers and trees, his seasons and his rills and his dingles, are decidedly and recognizably Indian. He writes at times with a Keatsian sensuousness; and his admiration for Tennyson is evident. Like Spenser, he loves to elaborate the felicities of bowers of bliss and the blossoming of youthful love. The description of a summer noon-day with which the poem opens is excellent:

Hushed is now
The mingled din of insect, bird and beast
That in the cool and freshening air of morn
Made vocal all the leafy wood around.

The description of Wassanta, of Spring, in Book IV is even better as a piece of verbal embroidery. "Like the first hopes of youth, Wassanta comes."

He seems at first to tread on tip-toe o'er
Tree, shrub, and creeping plant, as if he feared
To wake them from their wintry sleep.

But soon there is Nature's plenty everywhere:

And then the delicate lilies on the lake
That revel in the sun's resplendent beams;
And tender *kumuda* flowers that coyly wait
The silver moonlight, and then softly ope
Their beauteous face, and smile upon the calm
And cloudless heavens; the overpowering breath
Of the bright golden *champah*, and the soft
But exquisite odour of the modest buds
Of *malati*; all, all are strangely sweet
And, witching to the sense.

Mr. Pai thus perceives Nature's habiliments accurately and sketches them beautifully. The elephant, the tiger, the swan, sunrise and noon-day, the feast of Love, the cloudless azure of the skies, the aerial courtship of the Indian butterflies, they are all verbally re-created and securely niched in the poem.

Mr. Pai is essentially a poet, interested in the values and verities that constitute our cultural heritage. Occasionally, however, the social reformer speaks. Vikrama's benefactress says:

A poor widow I
..........Of our mother Earth's
Uphappy daughters one........

Elsewhere Mr. Pai remarks:

For thus it was
Of yore in this rich sunny land of Ind.
Not then as now was helpless little child
And half-grown youth together tied for life
With ancient words they scarce could understand;
For warriors bold and lovely women claimed
Freedom to give their hearts where'er they chose.

But such passages do not impair either the integrity or the unity of the poem.

Mr. Pai's versification is uniformly good. Blank verse is a difficult instrument to handle, but Mr. Pai cleverly wields it. His is a creditable achievement, truly indigenous in setting, in theme, in sentiments. Since to a particular type of mind no appreciation sounds convincing unless a responsible English critic also expresses a similar opinion, let me extract the following passage from an article in *East and West* contributed by Dr. Michael Macmillan, sometime Principal of the Elphinstone College, Bombay:

"It is impossible for a European writer, however keen may be his powers of observation, and however richly endowed he may be with imagination, to thoroughly understand Indian life and character and look upon Indian palaces, gardens, jungles, pageants and all the other richly coloured elements of Indian surroundings with the eye of a native of the soil. Thus it appears to us that neither Moore, nor Southey, nor Sir Edwin Arnold, nor Mr. Rudyard Kipling, nor Sir Alfred Lyall, nor Professor Bain of Poona, in their most brilliant efforts to give poetic expression to the glamour of the gorgeous East, have succeeded in producing as true a picture of India as the less ambitious and more homely verses of the author of *Angel of Misfortune*."

Tragedy of Western Civilisation

By Dr. RABINDRANATH TAGORE

[Poet Rabindanath Tagore made a scathing condemnation of British rule in India, in the course of his address on his 80th birthday celebrated at Santiniketan on April 14 by the Visva-Bharathi. The following are extracts from the authorised English rendering of his address which was given in Bengali].

OUR direct contact with the large world of man was linked up with the contemporary history of the English people whom we came to know in those early days. It was mainly through their mighty literature that we formed our ideas with regard to these new-comers to our Indian shores. In those days the type of learning that was served out to us was neither plentiful nor diverse nor was the spirit of scientific enquiry very much in evidence. Thus our scope being strictly limited, it was the prevailing fashion among the elite of those days to fall back upon the language and literature of the English. Their days and nights were eloquent with the stately declamations of Burke with Macaulay's long-rolling sentences: discussions centred upon Shakespeare's drama and Byron's poetry and above all, upon the large-hearted Liberalism of the nineteenth century English politics.

Though tentative attempts were being made for gaining our national independence at heart, we had not lost faith in the philanthropy and generosity of the English race. This belief was so firmly rooted in the sentiments of our leaders that they hoped that the victor would of himself pave the path of freedom for the vanquished.

This belief was based upon the fact that England at the time provided the persecuted all over the world with a home and shelter in her hospitable land. Anyone who had striven for the integrity of his nation was sure to receive the most warm-hearted welcome at the hands of the English. Thus, in their character I had seen the purest ideal of philanthropy and I was led to set them on the pedestal of my highest respect. The generosity of their nature had not yet been vitiated by Imperialist pride. Their noble nature was to us a source of perpetual admiration. About this time I had the opportunity of listening to the speeches of John Bright, both in and outside Parliament. Even as a boy I was struck with his largeness of heart which overflowed all narrow national bounds and spread its influence far afield. That is why even in these days when England had fallen from her former grace, I remember and cherish my recollections of those other days.

Certainly that spirit of abject dependence upon the innate goodness of our rulers was no matter for pride. What was remarkable,

however was the whole-hearted way in which we gave our recognition to human greatness even when it revealed itself in the foreigner.

The best and noblest gifts of humanity cannot be the monopoly of a particular race or country, its scope may not be limited nor may it be regarded as the miser's hoard buried underground. That is why the English literature which nourished our minds in the past, even now conveys its deep resonance to the recesses of our heart.

It is difficult to find a suitable Bengali equivalent for the English word 'civilisation'. That phase of civilisation with which we were familiar in this country was known as 'good conduct'; in other words, it was mainly a set of ethical codes. Narrow in themselves these codes originated in a circumscribed geographical area. It was said that the rules of conduct which for generations together had held good in that strip of land, Brahmavarta by name, bound on either side by the rivers Saraswathi and Drisadvati—were the rules to govern the society in general. In other words conduct according to what our ancients said, was regulated by a number of traditions and conventions, however heartless or unjust they might have been. That is how a pharisaic formalism gradually got the upperhand of free thought and the ideal of 'good conduct' which Manu found established in Brahmavarta steadily degenerated into socialised tyranny.

During my boyhood days the attitude of the cultured and educated section of Bengal, nurtured on English learning was permeated with a feeling of revolt against those formal laws of conduct. A perusal of what Rajnarain Bose has written, describing the ways of the educated gentry of those days, will amply bear out what I have said just now. In place of the codes of conduct we accented the ideal of civilisation as revealed in the character of the English people.

In our own family this change of spirit was welcomed for the sake of its sheer rational force and its influence was felt in every sphere of our life. Born in that atmosphere and with my intuitive love of literature, I had naturally set the English on the throne of my heart. Such then was the state of affairs in the first chapters of my life. And then came the parting of ways, accompanied with a painful feeling of disillusion.

I began increasingly to discover that those who accepted the best truths of civilisation disowned them with impunity, whenever questions of selfishness and greed were involved. There came a time when perforce I had to snatch myself away from mere appreciation of literature and contemplation of the great world of civilisation. As I emerged into the stark light of bare facts, the sight of dire poverty of the Indian masses rent my heart. Rudely shaken out of my dreams, I began to realise that perhaps in no other modern state had there been such hopeless dearth of the most elementary needs of existence.

How could I help thinking that it was India that had kept replenishing the coffers of the British people? Such travesty of the human ideal, such aberration in the mentality of the so-called civilised races, such criminal and contemptuous indifference to the crores of helpless Indian people I could never have imagined. I had associated the highest conception of civilisation with the character of the English race which I had come to respect through their literature.

That mastery over machine through which the English had consolidated their sovereignty over their vast Empire, had been kept a sealed book away from the reach of this helpless country. And yet have we not seen with our own eyes what industrialistion did to Japan and how within a short time she achieved wonders. I have also seen how Japan's civilised administration helped to distribute among her own people the fruits of her all-round progress. I have also been privileged to witness the unstinted energy with which Russia was trying to fight disease and illiteracy. Her industry and application has helped Russia in steadily liquidating ignorance and poverty and abject humiliation from the face of a vast continent. Her people have not observed distinction between one seat and another, one class and another. They have spread far and wide the influence of that human relationship which is above and beyond everything petty and selfish. Their astonishingly quick progress had made me happy and jealous at the same time.

While in Moscow, I particularly liked one characteristic of Soviet administration and that was the pleasing fact that there was no conflict of interests on the score of Communal Award between Muslims and non-Muslims: a truly civilised administration impartially served their common interests.

I have also seen Iran, newly awakened to a sense of national self-sufficiency, attempting to fulfil her own destiny, freed from the deadly grinding stones of the European Powers. It is significant that her good fortune dates from the day when she finally disentangled herself from the meshes of European diplomacy. With all my heart I wish well of Iran. May she deserve well at the hands of Fate!

In the neighbouring kingdom of Afghanistan there is much to be desired so far as her education and society are concerned. But the fullest possibilities are there. And that is so, because up till now, she has not succumbed to the benumbing influence of any European power, vaunting of its civilisation. Thus, these countries are now well on their way towards real progress.

Under the dead weight of British administration India remained at the very bottom—static in her utter helplessness. So great and so ancient a civilisation as China, came to be corroded with the fatal addiction to opium into which her people were coerced. This insidious move was doubtless a part of the policy of exploitation of the weak.

When we were about to forget the shameful history of how the British had seized a portion of China, we were painfully surprised by another event.

While Japan was quietly devouring North China, her act of savage aggression was considered a minor incident by the insolent veterans of British diplomacy.

We have witnessed from this distance how slyly the British statesmen took away the bottom out of the Republic of Spain and we have also seen how a band of courageous Englishmen chivalrously laid down their lives for Spain. Even though the English had not aroused themselves sufficiently to their sense of responsibility towards China in the Far East, in their own immediate neighbourhood they have not hesitated to sacrifice themselves to the cause of individual freedom. Such acts of heroism reminded me over again of the true English spirit to which in those early days I had given my whole faith. I do not even want remotely to think of the feeling of amity that then existed between England and Germany. What puzzles me is how within so short a period, its imperialist greed could bring about such tragic disintegration in the character of so great a race.

One day I saw the English as a healthy nation, full of youthful vigour, ever ready to come to the help of those that needed it and to-day I see them prematurely old, worn out by the plague of evil that has surreptitiously robbed the nation of its well-being.

I had to recount this tragic story of how gradually we came to lose faith in the civilisation of the West. Coming back to India, we feel that the blackest of evils that has come in the wake of British administration was much more than the rulers' shameful neglect and apathy to provide the minimum amenities of civilised existence.

Their failure is nowhere more apparent than in the cruel way in which they have contrived to divide the Indians amongst themselves. The pity of it all lies in the fact that now perhaps they want to lay the blame at the door of our own society. This ugly and savage culmination of Indian history would never have been possible, if communalism and provincialism and lack of mutual faith were not sedulously encouraged to grow to their present vicious form, by some secret conclave, holding the highest responsibilities in the system of administration.

I can never believe that Indians are in any way inferior to the Japanese, either in intellect or in capacity. The fundamental difference between the two lies in the fact that whereas India is not only overcome, but is also over-whelmed by the British, Japan had never allowed her interests to be clouded over by the benevolent protectorate of some European Power. Our rulers have established, what they call the government of 'law and order'—or, in other words, a policeman's administration.

It is now no longer possible for us to retain any respect for that mockery of civilisation which believes in ruling by force and has no faith in freedom at all. By their miserly denial of all that is best in their civilisation, by withholding true human relationship from the Indians, the English have effectively closed for us all paths to progress.

And yet my good fortune has often brought me into close contact with really large-hearted Englishmen. Without the slightest hesitation I may say that the nobility of their character was without parallel—in no country or community have I come across such greatness of soul. Such examples would not allow me to lose faith in the race which produced them. I had the rare blessing of having Andrews—a real Englishman, a real Christian and a true man—for a very close friend. To-day in the perspective of death his unselfish and courageous magnanimity shows all the brighter. The whole of India remains indebted to him for his various acts of charity which distinguished a life-time of dedicated service. But personally speaking, I am especially beholden to him, because he helped me to retain in my old age that feeling of respect for the English race with which in the past I was inspired by their literature and which I was about to lose completely. Along with his memory the innate greatness of his people will abide with me for ever. I count such Englishmen as Andrews not only as my personal and intimate friends, but as friends of the whole human race. To have known them has been to me a treasured privilege. They made me believe that English prestige will be saved from every shipwreck if there were more of such Englishmen. Had I not met them, not even the faintest hope would mitigate my despair with regard to the Western nations.

Meanwhile the demon of barbarity has given up all pretence and has emerged with unconcealed fangs and teeth, ready to tear up the world and spread devastation. From one end to another the poisonous fumes of hatred defile the atmosphere. This plague of persecution which lay dormant in the civilisation of the West, has at last, roused itself to create havoc and desecrate the spirit of Man. In our present luckless, helpless and hapless poverty have we not already seen this world-wide destruction at work? A mortal combat has begun between one power and another, and no one knows what it will bring about in the end.

The wheels of Fate will some day compel the English to give up their Indian empire. But what kind of India will they leave behind, what stark misery? When the stream of their centuries' administration runs dry at last, what a waste of mud and filth will they leave behind them! I had at one time believed that the springs of civilisation would issue out of the heart of Europe. And to-day when I am about to quit the world that stubborn faith has gone bankrupt altogether.

To-day my one last hope is that the deliverer will be born in this poverty-stricken country and from the East his divine message will go forth to the world at large and fill the heart of man with boundless hope. As I proceed onward, I look behind to see the crumbling ruins of civilisation strewn like a vast dung-heap of futility. And yet I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in man. I would rather look forward to the opening of a new chapter in his history after the cataclysm is over and the atmosphere rendered clean with the spirit of service and sacrifice. Perhaps that dawn will come from this horizon, from the East where the sun rises. Another day will come when the unvanquished Man will retrace his path of glory, despite all barriers to win back his lost human heritage. To believe in the final and irrevocable doom of humanity is certainly a crime but I shall not be guilty of hugging illusion for reality.

Finally, I shall proclaim that the day has come when it will no longer be safe for the mightiest of powers to give vent to proud complacence. We must realise the truth of what our sages said:

"By iniquity a man may thrive, may see many a good in life may conquer his enemies, but iniquity, at last is sure to overhelm and destroy him."

Suchindram Temple.

By K. P. PADMANABHAN TAMPY, B.A.

TRAVANCORE has for many centuries been famous as the favoured goal of pilgrims. The age-old shrines at *Suchindram, Kumari Kanya, Thiruvattar, Kumara Koil, Neyyattinkara, Thiruvallam, Ananthasayanam, Janardhanam, Vaikom, Ettumanoor, Haripad, Thiruvalla, Chengannur, Aranmula, Ambalapuzha, Kaladi* and *Sabari Mala* situated in Travancore are some of the most celebrated and sacred places of worship in India. Eleven of the shrines considered to be supremely sacred by the Vaishnavas in all India, are in Travancore. Hymns in praise of these great temples have been sung by the Alwars or Vaishnavite Saints.

Suchindram—the Story of Indra's Purification. At Suchindram, forty-five miles to the south-east of Trivandrum and eight miles to the north of the Land's End of India, there is a hoary temple which has earned an enduring reputation among the great shrines of India, for its high sanctity, distinctive architecture, and annual Car Festival. Tourists who travel from Trivandrum to Cape Comorin through India's longest concrete road, cannot fail to notice the towering Gopuram of the Suchindram Temple which dominates the landscape for miles and miles around. In this age-old Temple of unique architectural beauty, are enshrined the *Trimurthies* (the Hindu Trinity), Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the Protector and Siva, the Destroyer. Rich in colourful tradition and inspring Puranic lore, the Suchindram temple is unique in its *Moorthy Vishesh* (the great powers of the Deity consecrated in the shrine). Legend and tradition aver that the Suchindram shrine was in existence even in the *Krita Yuga* but there is historical evidence to show that the temple is at least twelve centuries old. This shrine is excelled in wealth, sanctity and grandeur only by the Sri Padmanabhaswamy Temple at Trivandrum wherein is enshrined the tutelar deity of the Ruling House of the State. The Suchindram Temple was the favourite place of worship of the Chera, Chola, Pandya, Vijayanagar, and Venad Kings of old.

Suchindram is named after God Indra, the chief of the Devas for according to a legend, it was here that Indra was purified and he obtained release from a curse Suchindram literally means the site at which Indra was absolved of his sins and he attained purity. The inner walls of the gigantic seven-storeyed Gopuram contain an exquisite and vivid pictorial representation of the entire legend of Indra's purification. The unique and most artistic manner in which the *Sthala Vishesh* (sanctity of the locality) and the story of the shrine have been recorded in a series of mural paintings extorts full-volumed

appreciation. The story as recorded in these beautiful frescoes runs as follows:—

Indra, the all-powerful Lord of the celestial Beings, became enamoured of the beautiful Ahalya, Rishi Gautama's spouse. One dark night, Indra disguised as a cock, came close to the hermitage of the sage and lustily crew. Gautama woke up, and thinking that it was already dawn, hastened to the river for his morning ablutions. Assuming the form of Gautama, Indra entered the Asram and told Ahalya that he had returned as it was not really dawn. The real rishi, on reaching the river, was surprised to find that Goddess Ganga was still in slumbers. Exercising his supernatural powers, Gautama discerned to his great wrath that Indra had played a nasty trick on him. The sage rushed into the hermitage, and in flaming rage uttered a hideous curse on Indra. Bewildered and repentant, the Lord of the Devas crouched timidly at the feet of Gautama and implored his mercy. The sage who took compassion for the wretched Indra told him that it was not in his power to nullify the curse, and that only the *Trimurthies* possessed the power of absolving Indra from the curse. The distraught Indra, in shame and pain, fled to a cave in the Himalayas and hid himself there, with the dire result that his duties were neglected, and a terrible drought overtook the earth.

In the lovely forest of Jnanaranya, there lived the great sage Atri and his dutiful wife Anasuya who was well-known for her chastity and piety. The entire forest became parched, due to a severe drought. Birds and animals died in large numbers, trees withered and the forest presented a heart-rending scene. To invoke divine blessings Atri commenced the performance of penance. Brahma made his appearance before the sage and said that he could not divine the cause for the dismal failure of the monsoons. Rishi Atri, undaunted then invoked the mercy of Vishnu who, pleased with Atri's devotion, appeared before him but could not tell why the monsoons had failed. Atri with redoubled enthusiasm prayed to Siva and sought the mercy of the *Trimurthies*. The Trinity presented themselves betore Atri and told him that the rains had failed on account of Indra who was not discharging his duties, but was hiding in shame in the Himalayas, unable to show himself out after sage Gautama's curse, and that only Indra who controlled the rains was competent to redress the sage's grievances.

Atri forthwith repaired to the Himalayas and performed a great *yaga* with the intention of winning the favours of all the celestial Beings. Before Atri's departure, Anasuya washed the feet of her Lord with cold water, collected it in a vessel and preserved it, as she believed in its power to grant all her wishes during her husband's absence. The mighty spiritual force with which Atri performed the Yaga, brought before him the entire processional of the Devas and

Gods except Indra and the *Trimurthies*. After a while, even Indra came out of his place of concealment but the *Trimurthies* did not turn up. The *Trimurthies* who wanted to teach Indra a lesson for his misconduct planned to frustrate Athri's *Yaga*. They requisitioned the assistance of the ever resourceful Narada, to prevail upon Atri to give up the *Yaga*. Narada always on the alert to play tricks on people, was only too pleased to undertake the job. Narada who had long been planning to put down the pride of Lakshmi, Saraswati and Parvathi (the wives of the *Trimurthies*) who were too elated over their chastity saw here an opportunity to humble the three Goddesses.

Narada went to the Asram of Atri. Greatly pleased with Anasuya's chastity, Narada blessed her. He forthwith returned to the world of the Devas, taking with him some pieces of iron, resembling grams in shape and size Pretending that he was very hungry Narada requested the wives of the *Trimurthies* to fry for him the grams which he kept in his hands. The Devis ridiculed the idea of frying the iron grains and offered to feed him sumptuously but Narada insisted on being fed with the grams fried. The Devis interlocuted that none could fry iron grams and that they would render homage to any woman in the celestial or terrestrial spheres who could perform that miracle. Narada descended to the hermitage of Atri and requested Anasuya to fry the grams. She was at her wit's end. Fully confident of the great powers of the sacred water, she sprinkled a few drops over the iron grams and lo! they were converted into real grams. These she fried and gave to Narada. Delighted, Narada hastened to the Heavens and showed the grams to the Devis and brought home to their minds that what they could not achieve was actually accomplished by a chaste and humble woman on earth. The Devis bowed their heads in shame and pleaded with Narada to help them to retrieve their lost prestige. He asked the Devis to prevail upon their husbands to visit Atri's hermitage and make Anasuya part with her chastity. The *Trimurthies* at first declined to undertake such a difficult task but at last they yielded to the wish of their spouses. Disguised as venerable old mendicants the *Trimurthies* came to Anasuya's cottage and begged alms. Anasuya received the guests with touching cordiality and served food before them. The guests did not commence eating. The mendicants told her that they had taken a vow that they would not touch any food served by a lady fully dressed and that unless she was prepared to serve them after stripping herself naked they had no alternative than to refuse her hospitality. Anasuya was in a great dilemma. She would lose her chastity if she served the guests in the manner demanded by them. If she did not please the guests she would be committing a great sin. She took some holy water and sprinkled it on the guests and lo! they were turned into three tiny babes, beating their hands in the air and crying for milk. Stripping herself naked, Anasuya suckled the babes one by one and appeased their hunger.

Narada, who was witnessing this funny episode unseen by anybody, ran to Atri who was performing *yaga*, and told him that Anasuya had given birth to three babies in his absence This news enraged Atri and, giving up the *yaga*, he flew to the hermitage to punish Anasuya for her infidelity. Anasuya prostrated herself before her lord and appraised him of what had intervened during his absence. Atri's supernatural powers enabled him to understand that the three babies were none other than the *Trimurthies* whose presence he had been longing for, and for whose *darshan* he had observed severe penance.

Narada lost no time in repairing to the Heavens and describing to the Devis the ludicrous plight of their Lords. He enjoined the Devis to beg of Anasuya to release the *Trimurthies*. The Devis visited Anasuya and implored her to restore the babes to their original forms. By the power of the sacred water, Anasuya transformed the babes into the mendicants. Pleased with the devotion and chastity of Anasuya the *Trimurthies* assumed their full forms. Atri and Anasuya prostrated themselves before the Trinity and worshipped them. The Devas and other celestial beings also rushed to the place and worshipped the *Trimurthies* who announced that the spot at which they were assembled would ever be the most sacred to worship Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

Narada proceeded to Indra and related to him the story of the manifestation of the Trinity at Jnanaranya and asked him to worship the *Trimurthies* and get absolved from Gautama's curse. Accompanied by Narada and Brihaspati, the Guru of the Devas, Indra arrived at Atri's hermitage and performed penance. At last the *Trimurthies* were moved and they purified Indra, converting the shameful marks on his body into a thousand luminous eyes. The site at which this sacred incident took place has been hailed as *Suchindram*.

Another legend gives the following version of Indra's purification. Indra who was cursed by Gautama for having misbehaved towards Ahalya, was advised by Brihaspati, the Guru of the Devas, to worship Sthanumalayaperumal, and obtain release from the curse. Accordingly Indra hastened to the Sthanumalaya Temple, in his chariot. To the west of the Agasthyakudam, a peak in South Travancore, sacred to Rishi Agastya Indra was stopped by Nandikeswara the chief of the retinue of Siva, and asked to proceed to the temple on foot. The place at which Indra is believed to have alighted from his chariot is now known as *Theroor*. Indra did penance and Sthanumalaya Perumal appeared before him. In the presence of a large gathering of rishis, Indra dipped his body into boiling ghee and was purified. Until a century ago the ordeal of dipping the right hand in a small cauldron of boiling ghee was performed in the Suchindram temple, as it was popularly believed that if any person accused of adultery or murder plunged his right hand into boiling ghee, and if the hand was not burned his

innocence was proved. There are some old records in the Suchindram temple relating to this ordeal.

Orthodox folk believe that the image of the *Trimurthies* in the Suchindram temple was consecrated by Indra himself, and that the last *pooja* late every night is performed by him in grateful memory of his absolution from the curse. Pious Hindus believe that at dead of night God Indra visits the *Sanctum Sanctorum* and offers *pooja* to Sthanumalayaperumal and that the tinkling of Silver bells could be heard if any devotee keeps vigil in faith and adoration. It is remarkable to note that the same *Santikkaran* (priest) is not allowed to perform *pooja* on consecutive days in this shrine lest he should notice the alterations effected in the arrangements of the garments, jewels and utensils of the Deity from the condition in which they were left the previous night, and the impressions left behind by Lord Indra. Priests who conduct *poojas* in this Temple have to take a solemn oath that on no account will they divulge to anybody whatever they might happen to see or hear inside the holy of holies.

In the precincts of the Temple is an old Konna tree which is worshipped by pilgrims who ascribe supernatural powers to it. It is estimated that this tree is more than 2000 years old. Popular belief endorsed by the Puranas is that this tree must have been originally a peepul tree in the *Krita Yuga*, a Tulsi plant in the *Tretha Yuga* and a *Wilwom* tree in the *Dwapara Yuga*. Legend says that this Konna tree was originally a peepul tree and that there was a *Siva Lingom* (Phallus) near it and that Great Rishies, Agastyan, Vamadevan, Vyasan and the Great Philosopher Adhi Sankaracharyar had come to Suchindram to worship this *Sivalingam*.

The Temple Gopuram: The Suchindram temple gopuram, a gigantic, solid, tapering structure crammed with exquisite carvings of intricate design stirs up the imagination of the tourist and pilgrim. A unique and spectacular sight it is to see this lofty tower tinted by a delicate pink by the rosy beams of the morning sun. The seven-storeyed gopuram is of the Tamil type and the visitor is sure to stand dazed and stupified at the vastness of conception of those who designed it. The marvellous handiwork of the stone carvers' art is nowhere else more strikingly demonstrated than in this unique structural entity. The Gopuram which faces the east exhibits a riotous exuberance of human fancy excelling every mechanical restraint. All that is colourful in human feeling and fantastic in human faith are sculptured on it. The innumerable niches, recesses, and images in chaotic profusion, confuse both eye and brain. The figures of deities reveal the wonderful sureness of touch and deftness of conception of the master craftsmen whose art bears comparison only with the great art of Greek and Roman sculptors who created petrified music dominated by sculptural rhythm. The Suchindram gopuram is a full-toned

sculptural symphony which expresses the acme of inspired art. A procession of deities, legendary animals, arabesque patterns etc., rush upwards, in one uninterrupted stream. Sjt. Mahadev Desai, in his well-known book *The Epic of Travancore*, says that "the gopuram over the gate of the Suchindram Temple is the biggest and the most elaborately constructed in the whole of India". He who ascends the gopuram finds his reward on reaching the summit. The air is full of music. A magnificent panorama unfolds itself to his view. At a distance he sees the jagged outline of the Veli Mala Range, enveloped in mist, and the vast shimmering sea girdling the land. Gleaming pale green lakes and fields, winding streams and irrigation canals, clusters of pretty villages, dense coconut and palmyrah plantations, extensive paddy fields looking like green carpets, tall spires of churches and lofty gopuram temples shooting up amidst a landscape of arcadian jollity and exuberance, greet his vision close at hand. Immediately ahead, he sees the picturesque streets with houses on either side. The main street as seen from the top of the gopuram is a most beautiful sight. It is believed that God Indra performed penance in the hills seen at a distance.

Local tradition avers that the imposing eastern gopuram in the temple was originally constructed by a king of the Vijayanagar Dynasty in 1545. The construction of the seven-storeyed tower which rises imposingly in the east, was begun in the year 1056 M. E. under the command of His Highness Sri. Visakam Thirunal and was completed in the year 1063 M. E. during the reign of His Highness Sri Mulam Thirunal.

Mural Art in the Temple. The Gopuram is remarkable for its exquisite mural painting depicting the colourful story of Indra's curse. The paintings on the inner walls of the seven storeyed gopuram have been ascribed to the 11th and 12th centuries. These still pictures present a thrilling story more interesting and spectacular than a modern movie. The genius of the masters who executed these lovely paintings may be discerned in many a line and curve and in the wonderful delicacy of the well-toned vegetable colours used in painting on walls. The paintings, distinguished by forms that are poems and colours that are melodies, are saturated with holy feelings and noblest aspirations. In these frescoes Hindu Art holds itself to the essential dignity of the human soul and impresses upon the connoisseur that the artists who created these marvellous paintings were Titans of energy and creative genius. The figures in these mural paintings are of heroic proportions. Deeply devotional and intensely humanistic, these paintings display the most beautiful union of painting with poetical mythology and genuine theory of music. The Frescoes express in vivid colours what language itself can only imperfectly express. The mural paintings which are at once spiritualised and

spiritualising possess a powerful rhythm which sets the heart strings vibrating. They display a vigorous style and evoke fear and veneration. The frescoes are remarkable for their excellent grouping, cosmic symbolism, dignity of demeanour, elegance of craftsmanship, decorative delicacy, wonderful vitality and feeling, great meditative charm, perfection of technique, impressive continuity, and the variety of poses and expressions of the figures throbbing with exalted life. Each painting is a masterpiece in which the soul and senses are addressed in one evocative harmony. In the words of an eminent art critic these Mural Paintings show "a distinctiveness, compounded of skill in composition within a given space, of designed detail, of strength of line and of colour-schemes that satisfy the requirements of both symbolism and artistic effectiveness". No lover of art and aesthetics can afford to miss an examination of these paintings in this shrine of Art.

Temple Architecture. The temple is one of the finest examples of Dravidian architecture. The shrine is remarkable for its *gopurams* (gate pyramids) *Mandapams* (porches) and pillared halls all of which are massive and magnificent. It is a world of its own with its many secondary sanctuaries clustered round the central pile. To obtain a full view of the temple one should look down from the gopuram. The entrance is under a grand gateway through a richly ornamented passage. The first impression of the shrine is bewildering and the sightseer or pilgrim is obsessed with a feeling of confusing superabundance. Stone pillars and statues, richly decorated heavy columns in granite with protruding brackets, fantastical forms of huge monsters, strange uncanny dragons, beautiful flowers, statuous groups of deific subjects, mythological heroes all wrought in stone—these keep the visitor spell bound, and lost in admiration of the amazing achievements of Hindu Art and architecture.

The temple is famous for its exquisite stone carvings. It is believed that Parasurama, one of the incarnations of Vishnu constructed the towers, mantapoms and corridors in this shrine. *The Oonjal Mandapam, Thirukonnayadi, Chempakaraman Mandiram, Veerapandyamani Mandapam, Alamkara Mandapam* and *Udayamarthanda Mandapam*—elaborately and exquisitely sculptured porches are marvels of art and monuments of historical importance. The "Chempakaraman Mandapam", the largest porch in the temple, was constructed by Chempakaraman, one of the renowned Chera Kings of old. The "Veerapandyamani Mandapam" is considered to be the gift of one of the early Pandya Kings. The "Alamkara Mandapam", constructed out of a single stone, supported by four massive pillars and twelve smaller pillars, is a unique specimen of the sculptor's art. Composite pillars comprised of twenty four to thirty-two pilasters containing quite a lot of decorative art are witnessed in these mandapams. Sculptures assigned to the eleventh and twelfth centuries are noticed

here. Life-like statues chiselled in granite of Thirumalanaick and Kings of Venad are identified. The Karna image in the temple is a wonderful example of Dravidian sculpture. Krishna and Gopies is another notable piece of sculpture.

Some of the stone pillars in the shrine are decorated with figures of a pretty damsel bearing a lamp in the jointed palms of her hands. The lamp bearers in granite and the pillar are carved from single pieces. The figures of lamp bearers in some of the images have been mutilated by persons who were unable to tolerate the works of art of an alien religion. This vandalism has been ascribed to a Muslim invader whose iconoclastic fury did not, however, cause any considerable havoc to the temple. In the words of a well--known critic of art "so admirably did the builders cut their architectural coat to their granite cloth that they created by subtle proportion a sense of largeness that seems like a tangible presence. To physical space they added a super-physical spaciousness by carving on the pillars deific figures and symbolical ornaments that stretch the imagination through heavy material to cosmic distances and supernatural degrees of consciousness".

One of the most remarkable curiosities in the Suchindram Temple is the group of twenty five small pillars carved on the sides of a single huge pillar. These slender pillars, when struck with the hand, give out different musical sounds which produce a weird effect on the stillness of the temple. The images of Veerabhadra, Dakshinamurti, Brahma and Subramania carved on a single panel in granite are some of the finest specimens of the art of the sculptors.

Exquisite bronze images of Siva, Parvati, Cheramanperumal and Saivite Saints are seen in the Suchindram Temple. The collection of jewels and images in the shrine are of great antiquity and value. The gigantic and awe-inspiring image of *Anjaneya* (Monkey God), over ten feet high, is one of the many imposing attractions of the temple.

The temple is rich in its inscriptions in *Vattezhuthu* alphabet and Tamil language which are of considerable historical importance. The rock to the south-western corner near the Kailasa shrine is regarded as the oldest portion of the temple. These inscriptions contain authentic information about the various gifts made to the temple by Rulers and important personages in South India. *The Travancore Archaeoligical Series* contain full texts and reproductions of these Inscriptions.

The Theppakulam (Temple Tank). The *Theppakulam*, with its elaborately sculptured mandapam in the centre is a great attraction. It is believed that on the Thiruvathira Day in the month of Dhanu the celestial beings meet at the banks of the tank and that it was on a Thiruvathira Day that the Devas and *Trimurthies* blessed Atri and

Anasuya at the spot where the temple tank is situated at present. There are dwelling houses on the banks of this tank where the priests reside. The imposing Mandapam in the middle of the tank is used for the performance of religious rites during the festive season. On the western side of the tank is a round rock. Close to it stands a sacred peepul tree. Legend says that this rock is Indra's elephant which was petrified as the result of the wrath of a rishi who was observing penance at the foot of the tree. The *rishi* who was annoyed by the falling of twigs and leaves pulled by the elephant in a sportive mood, cursed the animal and converted it into a rock. The rock resembles the curved back of an elephant.

A great relic of the past in the temple around which many legends have gathered, is the huge *vrishaba* (bull), made of white stone. Of imposing proportions, this image of God Siva's bull is regarded as sacred by worshippers. Legend says that many years ago when South Travancore was invaded by a Muslim chieftain the Suchindram Temple was saved from his vandalism by a miracle performed by this image of Siva's Bull. The story avers that the soldiers of the Muslim invader jeeringly asked the Hindus whether the stone bull would eat grass. The pious Hindus answered in the affirmative. Thereupon a bundle of grass was dropped before the bull and lo! it consumed the grass. This was viewed with consternation by the Muslim soldiers and they left the shrine.

Therottam (Carfestival.) Every year two *Utsavams* (festivals) the first in April—May and the second in December—January are celebrated in the Suchindram Temple with great pomp and splendour. The Suchindram temple attracts tens of thousands of pilgrims and sight-seers during the *Therottam* festival which last for ten days. On the fifth, seventh and ninth days large congregations of people from far and near flock to Suchindram. Her streets then are a living kaleidoscope of colour and humanity. On the ninth day occurs the famous *therottam* or Car Festival when the temple cars, some of the largest and most imposing in South India, are drawn in procession by devotees through the principal streets around the shrine. Decorated with silver tinsel and festooned with flowers, the festival cars which are round at the base and rise in tapering tiers, look gorgeous and picturesque. The wheels of these huge chariots are of solid wood. These cars named after Ganesa, Amman and Swami begin their run from the eastern gate. The *Swami Ther* is the biggest The image of the deity, profusely decorated, is placed inside a platform in the car after due ceremony. The Musicians attached to the temple walk ahead of the cars playing melodiously on various musical instruments. Ropes as thick as a man's thighs are securely fastened to the cars. The *Therottam* usually begins at 7-30 A. M. and closes by 9-30 A. M. Hindus believe that drawing the car is a meritorious service rendered

to God and that it will absolve one of one's sins. Elephants push the car from behind when they come to a stand still. Until the procession of the God's cars complete a full round and the cars return to the place from which they began their run, the Maharajas of Travancore do not break their fast. Such is the deep-rooted piety of the Ruling House of Travancore. The auspicious news of the successful culmination of the ***Therottam*** is intimated by the firing of relays of petards stationed at regular intervals from Suchindram to Trivandrum, a distance of 45 miles.

A Prayer

O God, my Father, and God, my Friend,
And God, my Guide to Poverty's end ;
Hear in our homes the children cry,
See in our streets the hungry die ;
While hushed machines and idle acres
Await the greed of profit-takers.
Send us Thy Prophets as of yore
To smite the starvers of the poor.
Light in our hearts the cleansing fires
And save us from the purchased liars,
Lend us Thy voice to pray them down
Send us Thy Saints to rule the town ;
Wash from our streets the bloody stain
And let Thy Justice live again ;
O God, our Father, and God, our Friend,
And God, our Guide to Poverty's end.

—*Upton Sinclair.*

Philosophy of the Two Birds

By SWAMI SIVANANDA

TWO birds, inseparable companions, dwell upon one and the same tree. One of them eats the fruits and the other looks on without eating. The first bird which eats the fruits is the Jiva or the individual soul. The other bird is the Kutastha or the silent Sakshi or witness or the Pratyag Atman. The tree is the mysterious tree of Maya or Samsara. The fruits are the fruits of Karmas done by the Jiva, viz., pleasure and pain.

The first bird, Jiva or Man laughs when he eats the sweet almonds and drinks the cup of tea that is nicely sweetened with sugar to his taste; but when he eats the bitter almonds that are mixed with the sweet ones and when he drinks a cup of tea without sugar, he shows a different face altogether. When he gets a lucrative post, when he gets married or when he gets a son he laughs, but when his son or wife dies, when he is unemployed he weeps. When he moves in the car he laughs, when he suffers from rheumatism or acute dysentery he weeps.

He stoops to pick up worldly temptations and enjoyments. He is lured by the temptation of the world. He chooses what is pleasure (Preya) for the sake of the body and loses the true end. He lives in the midst of darkness but fancies himself as wise and learned. He goes round and round deluded in many crooked ways, as blind people led by the blind. The way to the Hereafter is not apparent to him. He is foolish. He is deluded by the delusion of wealth. "This is the world" he thinks, "there is no other"—thus he falls again and again under the sway of death.

To-day he eats dainty dishes, sweetmeats and fruits. Tomorrow he starves. To-day he travels in a motor car. Tomorrow he walks barefooted in thick jungles. He speculates and gets several lacs of rupees. Tomorrow he becomes bankrupt and walks in the streets as a beggar.

He is selfish, ignoble, hard-hearted, impatient, discontented, passionate, reckless. He speaks ill of others. He earns money by unlawful means, and leads an unrighteous life.

He feels he is in want of something, the nature of which he does not exactly comprehend. He seeks in the accomplishment of ambitious projects the rest, that he feels, he is in need of. But he finds that worldly greatness, when secured, is a delusion and a snare; he doubtless does not find any happiness or peace in it. He gets degrees, diplomas, titles, honours, power, name and fame; he marries, he begets children. In short, he gets all that he supposes would give him happiness. But he finds no rest.

He (jiva) is entangled in the Samsara by the five Kleshas—Avidya (ignorance), Asmita (Egoism), Rag-Dwesh (likes and dislikes), Abhinivesha (clinging to life). He is tied to this earthly life, by the three knots, Avidya (ignorance), Kama (desire) and Karma (actions).

He is endowed with the three bodies viz., physical body, subtle body (Linga Sarira or astral body), causal body (seed body, Karana sareera). He is enveloped by the five sheaths viz., Annamaya Kosha (food sheath), Pranamaya Kosha (vital sheath), Manomaya Kosha (mind sheath), Vijnanamaya Kosha (Buddhi sheath), and Anandamaya Kosha (bliss sheath). He does actions with the five Karma Indriyas or organs of action viz., Vak (speech), Pani (hands), Pada (feet), Upastha (reproductive organ), Gudha (anus). He gets knowledge of the world through the five Gnana Indriyas or organs of knowledge viz., Srotra (ears) Twak (skin), Chakshu (eyes), Jihva (tongue), Nasika (nose).

He does actions and expects fruits on account of his ignorance. The Samskaras (impressions) are imbedded in the Karana Sareera and subconscious mind. His accumulated Karmas are called Sanchita Karmas ; his current actions are called Agami or Kriyamana ; this will be added to his Sanchita. He enjoys in this life the fruits of his Prarabdha Karmas, the Karmas which have given birth to this body. Sanchita Karmas are destroyed by knowledge of the self. Current actions will not affect one when one does actions with Sakshi Bhav or Nishkamya Bhav. One will have to reap the fruits of Prarabdha.

He is bound by a chain of six links. The first link is Avidya. The second link is Aviveka (non-discrimination) that is born to Avidya. The third link is Abhimana or egoism born of non-discrimination. The fourth link of the chain is Rag Dwesh (attraction, repulsion) born of egoism. The fifth link is Karma. He does actions owing to Rag Dwesh. The sixth link is the body. He takes bodies to reap the fruits of his Karmas. If he attains knowledge of the Self, the whole chain is destroyed at once.

He will be freed from the taking of the physical body if he does not perform actions with expectation of fruits. He can free himself from Karmas, if he destroys Rag Dwesh. He can destroy Rag Dwesh if he annihilates egoism. He can annihilate egoism, if he destroys non-discrimination. He can destroy non-discrimination if he annihilates ignorance or Avidya. Avidya is the root cause for his sufferings.

This bird, Jiva, leaves the physical body here, goes to heaven to enjoy the fruits of his virtuous actions with the help of his astral body and comes back to this Mrityuloka when the Karmas are exhausted. He carries the Samskaras and Vasanas along with the astral body. This process of Awagaman (going and coming) lasts till he gets Brahma Gnana.

The other bird, Sakshi, is self-existent. He is not affected by pleasure and pain, virtue and vice, likes and dislikes. Pleasure and pain, virtue and vice, likes and dislikes are the Dharmas or the attributes of the Antahkarana or the internal instrument only. They cannot touch the pure, self-luminous, immortal, subtle, all-pervading attributeless and formless Sakshi. Even in a foot-ball or cricket match the spectator is not affected by the success or failure in the game. It is the players only who are affected by the success or failure.

He, the Brahman, is self-existent and self-luminous. He is the ear of the ear, eye of the eye, tongue of the tongue, mind of the mind, life of the life. All the senses, mind and Prana derive their power from Brahman, the source, for everything. You cannot hear without Him. You cannot see without Him. You cannot breathe without Him. You cannot think without Him. He is the Inner Ruler (Antaryami).

By the command of the Brahman the ocean does not exceed its limits. By His command, the sun shines and rises at the appointed time in the East. By His command Indra, Vayu, Yama and other Devatas perform thier appointed duties. By His command the fire burns. By His command the mind, Prana and the senses function.

Brahman cannot be defined. To define Brahman is to deny Brahman. The only adequate description of Brahman is a series of negatives. That is the only reason why the Upanishads declare "Neti Neti", "Not this, not this."

What is neither short nor long, neither that much nor this, neither black nor white, neither stout nor thin, neither good nor bad—that should be understood as Brahman.

That which is neither subtle, nor dense, which has neither caste nor name, which is immutable, immortal, bodiless, which is beyond the reach of mind and speech—that should be understood as Brahman. Brahman is distinct from the gross, subtle and causal bodies. He is the soul of all. He is the Inner Ruler of all. He is eternally free. He is without action, without motion.

That Supreme Being which is the Immortal Self of all, which is beginningless, which is immutable and infinite, which is beyond the reach of mind and speech is Brahman or Sakshi.

When the three knots are cut asunder, when the Kleshas are destroyed by the attainment of the Knowledge of the Self, the individual soul becomes identical with the Sakshi and attains immortality and eternal bliss.

Jiva purifies his heart through selfless service, charity and virtuous actions. He cultivates sublime virtuous qualities, develops the four means of salvation, Viveka (discrimination), Vairagya (dispassion) Shad Sampat (six virtues) and Mumukshatwa (burning desire for liberation), hears the Srutis, reflects and meditates on the significance of the Mahavakyas or great sentences of the Upanishads such as "Aham Brahma Asmi—I am Brahman", "Tat Twam Asi—Thou art That," and eventually attains knowledge of the Self.

Thus he also does not eat the fruits of Karmas. He is freed from the bonds of Karmas. He also looks on like the other bird Sakshi, without eating.

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Ceol Side*

Fairy Music.

There rings a music soft and sweet
That seems within the heart to sing,
Yet those alone its cadence meet
Who love to greet it bring.

The magic World is very near,
East of the sun, West of the moon,
And they its melody shall hear
Who are with it in-tune.

Its theme-song sounds the age old lay
Of the two Worlds, below, above,
"Love is to Life the one high-way,
They only live who love".

—*F. H. Aldhouse,*
Translator.

Ancient Erse.

* Ceol = music, from Kayol.
Side = fairy „ Shee.

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Sandal Soap
a Welcome
Gift
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when you Shave with
KERALA SHAVING
STICK
BAKELITE BOWL
AND TUBE
THE
KERALA SOAP
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